

15 September - 4 November 1973)

Preparations for the visit

During the whole of my time - over ten years - with the War Resisters International, I constantly found that Latin America remained an unknown continent to the international pacifist movement, with a few notable exceptions, eg the work of the US Fellowship of Reconciliation and of some individuals like Glen Smiley and the Goss-Mayrs during the later half of the 60s. I had also found that exchange of literature was not enough to create meaningful contacts; even individual correspondence is not of sufficient value unless the people with whom you exchange letters are known to you in some way or other, particularly in relation to their struggles. Therefore the logical thing for me was to go to people personally - strengthening the already existing contacts and making new ones.

In choosing Latin America as the priority continent in my 1973 programme, I had specific points in mind. Firstly, I knew almost nothing about the continent - its people and their politics; and I had been feeling this gap for a long time. I thought I should immediately start trying to narrow it as much as possible. Secondly, I had been hearing people say that Latin America is the greatest challenge to nonviolence. I had believed it and still do, though I am convinced that one need not go to far away lands to find challenges. In fact the challenge in one's own town is great enough. Nonetheless, an inner compulsion made me decide on Latin America. Thirdly, I had my doubts about including Latin America among the 'third world' countries; although some of these have been dispelled I still have some left.

I started learning Spanish with the help of tapes. This gave me just a feel of the language. I should now take an intensive course in an institute. I also read some Latin American poetry (*12 Spanish American Poets* by H R Hays and *Mexican Poetry* edited by Octavio Paz). For the history of the continent I found George Pendle's *A History of Latin America* quite useful. It is concise but covers the whole continent.

It took more time than I expected to contact people and make a firm schedule. During my Spring 1973 trip to the States I had gathered enough information to begin with. The names given to me by the American Friends Service Committee and Glen Smiley proved very useful. On the basis of these and some of my own acquaintances a schedule was made as follows: Mexico, Argentina, Uruguay, Brasil and Venezuela. The period of stay in each country was kept short deliberately, because I had felt that this being the introductory visit, I should not put too much strain on the friends who had responded to my request generously. This was a correct decision, for, I now know, these friends would like me to make the next visit longer and they would know exactly how best to use it.

General impressions about nonviolence in Latin America

In Latin America there is not a peace movement in the same way as there is one for instance in the USA. There seems to be very little understanding of nonviolence, and there is hardly any literature on the subject in Spanish. There are very few groups which work in an organised way, the most important of these being that around Don Helder Camara in Brasil. I should say here that of all active groups and individuals that we can term revolutionary, I shall be concentrating on those who believe in nonviolence; where possible I shall try to put their work in perspective vis-a-vis that of other forces.

In the countries I visited I did find several individuals who are seeking ways to struggle against injustice and militarism by nonviolent means. Some of them are beginning to form discussion and action groups. The existence of military dictatorships in most countries in Latin America means that people or organisations who talk of social change and justice whether by violent or nonviolent means are repressed. Therefore whatever efforts are being made to build nonviolent groups much of it has to be done quietly.

During the last few years one major continental and some local conferences and seminars on nonviolence have been held. This was due to the work done by Glen Smiley, Hildagard and Jean Goss-Mayr and a few others. As a result some people have been attracted by the concept of nonviolent social change. Another reason for the interest in nonviolence is based on the experience Latin Americans had with the emergence of Urban Guerrillas and the disillusionment in them because of their failure so far in achieving liberation from Capitalism. I was told by many people that instead of gaining popular support the guerrillas became more and more isolated from the people.

People working for nonviolent social change know quite well that to become relevant they should be able to show in practical terms how oppression can be fought nonviolently in countries with military dictatorships and where multinational corporations dominate the economic life of the people.

MEXICO - 15-21 September

Mexico has a population of little over 53 millions - second to Brasil. About 55% of these are mestizo and 29% Indian. Mexico has a great wealth of pre-colonial art and culture; some of the most sophisticated art was produced by the native americans - Aztecs, Mayans, Teotihuacacs and others - before the Spanish and other Europeans plundered America. Mexico was probably the region where that culture reached its highest. Some of the examples of this art are on display at the museum in Mexico City.

Mexico is one of the few countries in Latin America without a military dictatorship. Back in 1910 when the dictator Porfiro Diaz ruled the country a movement was started by Francisco Madero who asked for the organisation of study groups which would arouse the people to bring back democracy in Mexico. Madero believed that this could be done peacefully, and that people should participate in the affairs of their municipalities and in decision-making. When the Diaz government outlawed these groups and repressive measures were used to destroy them a powerful wing developed within the movement which asked for an armed struggle. Madero succumbed to this pressure and led the struggle. Diaz was deposed and Madero became the President. This did not suit the upper class and the US interests. It is said that a successful conspiracy was planned in the US Embassy to depose Madero and assassinate him. This caused a bloody revolution in which a million people lost their lives. Although much unrest and rivalries prevailed, every six years elections have been held according to the 1917 Constitution which does not allow re-election of an incumbent president.

In the early 20s a cultural regeneration took place, particularly in the art world. Artists like Diego Rivers and Jose Clemente Orozco led a revival of the art of mural painting, which can be interpreted as the continuation of the Aztec and Teotihuacan. At the same time it was the continuation of the Mexican Revolution. The frescoes

depict the struggle of the Mexican people for liberty and their desire to regain land which had been taken away from them by the Spanish, the Church and the foreigner, i.e. the US interests.

Mexico is a one party state. The official party is called Partido de la Revolucion Institucional. When a president nears the end of his term he nominates his successor. Although there are other political organisations they are by no means a threat to the Partido.

The US has great economic and political interest in Mexico. Being an adjacent country the US government keeps a sharp eye on it. In fact it is believed that the USA uses Mexico for her influence in Central America as it does Brasil for South America. There is certainly a very large number of US citizens seen in Mexico City, and US corporations are predominant in the Mexico economy.

The year 1968 saw widespread unrest and student revolt which were due to the alienation of the youth from the economic and political life of the country. Although the President said he recognised the need for a change, the revolt was brutally suppressed. While the administration believed that as the country was permanently governed by a revolutionary party there was no need for a call for meetings and demonstrations to demand social reforms, the students complained that the slogans and policies of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional had become out of date and the Party intolerant of dissent and inflexible. They said that the time had come when national problems should be discussed in public, instead of being settled by a few top leaders. It was unfortunate that students did not have any support from workers.

The revolutionary paintings of Rivera on the walls of the national palace are now only of interest to the crowds of tourists - for the thousands of Mexicans who work there and daily pass them their message is long lost.

I was not able on this visit to find out anything about the small groups of resisters and revolutionaries that must exist especially amongst the students. I do not think there is any overt revolutionary activity in Mexico at this time.

Nonviolence in Mexico

About five years ago a national seminar on nonviolence was held in Mexico. According to the Heberto Sein this seminar was a beginning of an organised movement for social change by nonviolent means. It encouraged possibilities for discussions in schools and universities of the question of justice in society. Heberto himself has developed audio-visual aids which he uses in all sorts of situations including street speaking and class rooms.

Heberto feels that there is a need to organise groups of people to fight against corruption by refusing to participate in corrupt practices, courageously facing the consequences. The other work the nonviolent groups will have to do is in the areas of land reform, education and participatory democracy. They rightly feel that training in nonviolent action is most important if the struggle is to have a chance of success.

Mexico has conscription, but owing to its unpopularity the Government is rather relaxed about it. There is no provision for conscientious objection. A young man at the age of 18 is required to register. He is asked to do some marching every Sunday for 50 weeks, at the end of which he is given a "cartilla" which is a certificate of the completion of his obligation. The fine for absence from a drill is

3 pesos; there have been cases when a person did not attend a single drill and yet received his "cartilla" by paying 150 pesos. I was told that Mexicans are generally anti-militarists - this impression is probably based on the opposition they staged against conscription in the early 40s.

My schedule

Mexico City has a well established Friends House, the Director of which is Ed Duckles. Ed and Jeane Duckles went to Mexico from the States over three decades ago. In fact they have built the House and made it a living centre. (Casa de los Amigos, Ignacio Mariscal 132, Mexico 1, D.F.). The Friends House has a three-fold programme: hospitality, projects in the country; and work in the City as a Friends Meeting House. They have a wide number of contacts and the House is visited by a good number of young men and women who are either in transit or go there to learn about the country. I had the opportunity of staying in the guest room of the Casa, and meeting some active people.

My schedule was prepared by Heberto Sein in consultation with Ed Duckles. Heberto is one of the important exponents of nonviolence in Latin America. I had once met him in India when he attended the first world pacifist conference held in Sevagram in 1949 and felt privileged to be guided, accompanied and translated by Heberto, who by the way is an official interpreter for the UN.

It was a very full schedule sometimes with three engagements in a day. I reached Mexico City at midday on Monday 15 October. The same day we went to Cholula, Puebla, a town about 50 miles away from Mexico City, for a meeting at the University of the Americas. Dick Ramsay, Lecturer in Anthropology, and who is interested in nonviolence, had arranged the meeting. The main point discussed was whether nonviolent alternatives were possible within the area of our own lives on which we have some control, and whether it could be a beginning of the non-violent revolution. After the meeting, which was attended by about 20 people, some of the participants continued on the possibility of forming a group on nonviolence: study and action, on the campus.

Heberto had organised a meeting of the Promotores de la No violencia, where people asked many questions on Gandhi's work and his concept of Satyagraha. It was a gathering of people of different ages and a good proportion of couples. Their interest was also in building a grass root programme of action. I emphasised the need for a global perspective. This led to suggestions for practical action, e.g. a large number of Mexicans should go to the Chilean Embassy and ask for application forms for visas saying they were concerned about their Chilean brothers and sisters and therefore would like to go to Chile to learn about the situation first hand. I hope some of those who were present at the meeting did this.

After a meeting at the CIDOC in Cuernavaca (Ivan Illich was not in Mexico at the time, but he had written to me welcoming my visit), I gave a lecture at the State University of Morenos. There were over 60 law students and the Head of the School of Law presided.

Explaining about the work of the WRI in the past decade I showed how comprehensive the nonviolent movement was becoming. Orthodox anti-militarism was no longer an adequate answer to our revolutionary needs.

Time and again during the whole tour I found that people, including university students, had very little information about other countries and things which were not included in the curriculum or courses taught in schools. It is a surprise for them when you say that

nonviolent action has shown good results under different situations in different countries. To most people nonviolence implies no-action and passive acceptance of injustice. It is good that Gene Sharp's big book is out; after giving some classical and some contemporary examples of nonviolent campaigns I used to recommend this book to everybody.

On 18 October we went to a secondary school in Cuernavaca (Isidro Fabela School). The head master, Prof. Hector Melgarejo Palafox, got enthusiastic and instead of the original plan of having two separate classes for only senior pupils, he got the whole school out in the courtyard - nearly 500 children of 11-17 years. I described our Sevagram school and how 3 hours of manual productive work daily, community life of the school and its relation with the life around, and nature were the main centres of education for both the pupils and teachers. I also pointed out that often children can make better judgement than their parents or teachers. Therefore they should learn to assert the dictates of their conscience, and whenever necessary refuse to obey commands which seem wrong to them, and if they did it in a civil way they will feel stronger. Heberto and I were both moved by the attentiveness of the children.

Escuela Preparatoria is a college for pre-university students. The meeting there was well planned and very well attended - in fact the main hall of the Escuela was crowded. The theme of the talk was "How can the youth work for peace and justice? Are adequate methods available?" After the talk and an average sort of discussion some students took us round the school. Their games field was almost wild, so I asked why the school did not make it good. "They say they have no money". The state can spend millions on armaments, how come they have no money for education! Shouldn't students organise a campaign and demand a good playground? As their own contribution they themselves should take up spades and clear up the ground. We suggested that by doing so they would put moral pressure on the authorities who would be obliged to act. The students were enthused, but I doubt if anything happened as a result of this conversation. It is not sufficient to introduce new ideas; there ought to be people on the spot to organise.

The Friends World College has a campus in Cuernavaca. A meeting was scheduled with the students, but they were too scattered and we had a limited amount of time. So we chatted with half a dozen students for an hour or so. My main interest was to learn how the different campuses of the College operate.

My last engagement was at the Friends House. It was the main item on my Mexican agenda, and it proved to be important. Ed Duckles had already given me an idea of the audience. I discussed the dynamics of nonviolence giving seven examples of successful nonviolent campaigns - in industrially highly developed societies and in less developed societies; in liberal democratic countries and in dictatorial regimes. As for organising struggles for peace and justice in industrialised society is concerned one must not ignore the fact that the rulers and oppressors have the most advanced and quantitatively unlimited weapons of violence, e.g. electronic battlefields, databanks etc. To combat these we have to create qualitatively different "weapons". Gandhi's "weapon" of satyagraha seems to me to be the most effective method of resistance people can develop and use today. Satyagraha has two aspects: one of resistance and the other of construction. Creating alternatives should be part of our fight against oppression and injustice. Justice and peace can not come without offering our best and taking the most serious risks.

ARGENTINA - 22-25 October

In area, Argentina is the second largest country in Latin America. It has a population of about 25 millions of which three millions live in the capital city - Buenos Aires. The racial stock of the country is overwhelmingly white European. There are very few Indians left in Argentina.

The coup of 28 June 1966 brought military dictatorship to Argentina. General Juan Ongania became President. He dispensed with the Congress and all the political parties, and assumed full powers. This was rather welcomed by the people who had become wearied of the ineffectiveness of the elected government and of the growing disorder created by Peronese resurgents. Peronist influence, however, continued growing. Persistent labour trouble and soaring cost of living weakened Ongania's position. His inability to handle the situation created by the kidnapping and killing of Armburn added to his unpopularity.

On 8 June 1970 heads of three armed forces deposed Ongania. Brig.Gen. Roberto Marcelo Levingston was proclaimed President (13 June). After only nine months or so in office, Levingston was overthrown and Lieut. Gen. Alejandro Lanusse became President on 26 March 1971.

Guerrilla activities greatly increased in the country. The Trotskyite Peoples Revolutionary Army kidnapped and killed a Fiat executive. An army commander was killed in a fight with guerrillas. In short, violent resistance against the regime grew stronger and stronger. The government banned all open air rallies and demonstrations; these added to the public unrest, particularly among the pro-Peron citizens.

Hector Campora delivered to the President a ten-point programme for national reconstruction drawn by Peron, who was living in exile in Spain. Lanusse accepted the plan and after some delay Peron visited the country at the end of 1972. It was apparent that the military wanted to get out of administration, but Lanusse wanted that some non-Peronese should win the 1973 elections. He had allowed Peron to visit the country hoping that the "Peron myth" would be exploded when the people of Argentina saw Peron himself. Instead, it was clearly demonstrated that Peron was still the most popular leader for Argentinians. Peron returned to Spain. Hector Campora stood for the Presidency with the slogan: "If I win Peron will rule". Campora won and then resigned for Peron to assume the office of Presidency.

It is believed that Peron's overwhelming victory was due largely to the support from the left, which included the Revolutionary Armed Forces and the People's Revolutionary Army. I was interested in the election slogans still seen on the walls of Buenos Aires. Some of them were: "With Peron everything, Everybody with Peron"; "Peron: Peace and Work"; "Only one objective: a powerful Argentina"; "Peron President - let the Yankees split a gut".

What is the position now after nine months of Peron rule? Already the left is being repressed. The Peoples Revolutionary Army has been outlawed. There is a systematic move against the left in the official world, especially in the universities. A journalist said that at a closed meeting of the ruling party it was decided that they "must get rid of the left wing people who have infiltrated our Party". So the country is moving rapidly to the right. It is likely that there is pressure from the US to "get rid of the left".

It is possible that the revolutionary guerrilla movements will re-emerge and the country will once again return to unrest and violence. Most of these groups are still active politically. With this

unexpected move to the right and repression of the left they will go underground and organise, this time with greater zeal. Despite the "Peron myth", Argentina does not seem to have a peaceful future.

I could not get in touch with any American Indians. I was told that the national life ignores the few Indians who have survived the extinction policies of the earlier rulers. In fact in South America the native American, the descendent of the great culture, is considered sub-human. In some countries there is a systematic process of extermination of Indian populations; in some this is done by sheer neglect.

My schedule

On the list of Sections of the WRI the name of an organisation had been appearing for several years. It was :Fraternidad Esoterica Gnostica Latino-americana. I had written to them about my trip and had also sent reminders. I had hoped to see some pacifists working for antimilitarism in the city of Buenos Aires. I tried to trace them while staying in Buenos Aires, but did not succeed. Dick Chartier's name was given to me by Heberto Sein. Dick was one of the main propagators of nonviolence in Latin America, but he had left Buenos Aires some time ago. Earl Smith of Uruguay then asked me to contact another person, who also happened to be away from the city at that time, but who had asked a group called ARCA to make some arrangements for me. I did not know that ARCA was not an abbreviation of some longer name but the same as l'Arche, Lanza del Vasto's ashram in France.

It was midnight when I reached Buenos Aires airport, where I did not expect to be met, as I had not had a response to my communications. Just before reaching the passport control counter, when I was thinking of enquiring about hotels, I heard an airport official making an announcement which seemed to contain my name. Out of curiosity I went to hear and asked what the announcement was about. "Are you Mr Prasad?" I already had difficulties in obtaining visas, so with some anxiety I said, "Yes. Is there any problem?" "There are some people waiting for you outside." I was overjoyed; at the same time I had a strange feeling - in such a far away land, where I know nobody, how can there be "some people" waiting for me! With these thoughts I passed through customs etc. A young man rushed to me and asked if I was Devi Prasad. He did not speak English, nor did I have enough Spanish to continue the conversation after saying "si". Within a minute or two four people surrounded me, one of them spoke English. She explained to me that they were of the group called ARCA, which was Spanish for l'Arche, and they will be my hosts. (Amigos del Arca, Luis Maria Drago 12, Villa Adelina)

We went to the house "Amigos del Arca", where two of the members live and have built a carpentry and metal workshop. There is a meditating room with several of Lanza's books, and a guest room. The place is very simple; it reminded me of l'Arche where I had visited a few years ago. At the house we talked until 2.30 am and made plans for the next two days.

Amigos del Arca also produce a periodical called Paz y Justicia (Espana 890, San Isidro, B.A.). Adolfo Esquivel, a sculptor, edits it. We had an informal meeting with him and some others to make an all over review of the nonviolent movement throughout the world and the possibilities of putting Paz y Justicia in contact with other similar journals and groups. I offered to send them information on conscription and conscientious objection in different countries. Arca also arranged a meeting in a private house. About 18 people took part in it. In

such meetings I have often found that when the nonviolent struggle for justice and peace is interpreted as something with both resistance against injustice and oppression, and constructive action to create alternatives, people understand nonviolence better and accept it as a potential means for social change. Maria Elna Walsh, famous as the Joan Baez of Argentina, translated for me with much much sympathy and understanding.

Later the same evening another meeting was held at the Buenos Aires Centre of Movimiento de los Focolares, an international Catholic organisation for an alternative society. The officials and members of Focolares present at the meeting wanted to know about the WRI and the international nonviolent movement as a whole. They accepted a suggestion that in their reading room they should provide journals and literature of radical nonviolent organisations, especially those working for an alternative social order.

Some of the people associated with the nonviolent approach to social change, many of whom are also members or sympathisers of Arca, are trying to build an active centre of nonviolence for study, information and action, with at least one full time worker in Buenos Aires. They have written to many people in that area to publicise the idea and obtain support. Some of the small journals and group newsletters have published the appeal. As far as I could gather people who are looking for alternatives are willing to help. The Amigos del Arca itself has possibilities. If they succeed in setting up such a centre I am sure a good number of people will be attracted. Within the churches there are some leaders who want the nonviolent movement to develop in Argentina.

URUGUAY - 25-27 October

By Latin American standards Uruguay is one of the smaller countries with a population of a little less than 3 millions, of which nearly half live in the capital city of Montevideo. The proportion of the white population is very high - 89% - compared to the Mestizo - 10%. There are no American Indians left anywhere in Uruguay.

Until early this year Uruguay was not a country with military rule. It has been one of the most advanced countries in Latin America with regard to labour laws, i.e. better social services, higher wages, (there is a law concerning minimum wages), working day of eight hours and paid holidays. There was even autonomy for universities. After the military take-over, however, the situation, not only in universities but all over, has become extremely tense. This should be related to the upsurge of guerrilla activities in the late 60s.

In 1968 Jorge Pacheco Areco, as soon as he became President, started making frantic efforts to combat inflation and get rid of the leftist forces in the country. This aroused strong opposition from the workers. The country faced great chaos and large scale riots took place. A powerful guerrilla group called Tupamaru National Liberation Front became active. Originally their ideology was "never to kill", but when the police started their brutal repressive methods they began kidnapping and killing.

The situation worsened during the following years. At the same time a serious split within the ruling party - Colorado Party (red party: Uruguay has a two-party system, the other party is called "white party") took place in 1971. This increased the unpopularity of the government. The state of economy too became a serious problem.

The Tupamaru guerrillas escalated their activities. They kidnapped two US and one Brazilian officials. Before long they killed one of them; the Brazilian was freed after nearly 7 months when the guerrillas received a large ransom. A British official was kidnapped, but later freed. President Bordaberry came into power on 1 Marcy 1972. He had fought his election on the promise that he will stamp out the guerrillas. He gave very wide powers to the military to wipe out the Tupamarus. Along with the guerrillas many other people were indiscriminately imprisoned without trial. The military did not miss any chances to increase their influence over and control of the life of the people. They took over the administration completely early this year. They believe that a government which cannot maintain law and order should not be allowed to continue. After all, they say, they have managed to get rid of the guerrillas while the civilian government had failed to do so.

When the Confederation of National Workers (CNT) was dissolved, it went underground. Students too seem to have some kind of underground movement, probably aligned with the workers. It is believed that the Tupamarus have been almost completely stamped out, which to me seems unlikely. Certainly, they have been seriously weakened and disintegrated. Public meetings which might remotely be described as political cannot be held. Except for regular meetings, such as those of the Theosophical Society or Rotary Club, prior permission must be obtained from the regime.

One of the problems of Uruguay is land. "Estancias" - ranchers, who own vast areas of land, neither cultivate it fully nor are willing to sell it. What is needed is the breaking up of the large estancias into small pieces and distributing them to those who will work on them; but this is unlikely to happen in the foreseeable future.

Another problem is the movement of rural population to cities - a worldwide phenomenon, but more destructive for countries of Latin America, Asia and Africa. (Please see Observations and Conclusions at the end of this report)

My schedule

In 1971 a conference to plan and coordinate nonviolent action in Latin America was held in Alajuela, Costa Rica. At this conference Earl Smith undertook to do the coordination on a continental basis. Although Earl Smith is originally from the USA and after nearly half a century is still a US citizen, with his devotion to nonviolence and reconciliation and concern for justice in Latin America he is a Latin American in spirit. He built the Fellowship of Reconciliation in Uruguay and now keeps it going. His response to my initial correspondence was very encouraging. He came to the Montevideo airport to meet me. During the drive from the airport to the hotel downtown he told me the disturbing story of a meeting scheduled a week ago but which could not be held owing to military intervention. Hence the meeting arranged for me too did not take place.

However, I made contacts and had very useful talks at the Theological Seminary and a community centre. At the former I was told that according to the law exemption from military service has been given on grounds of conscience to some people, particularly the Mennonites. I was very much moved by the political understanding the leader of the comunidad displayed and by his conviction that nonviolence can be applied in Latin America in a positive way. He said, "visits and discussions like this give me courage and confidence in what we are doing..." This group is engaged in social problems in one of the poorest communities in Montevideo.

Alberto, a student, is active in the movement. Occasionally he prepares leaflets with information and quotations to be given to people he meets. He hopes to devote much more time for the nonviolent movement after finishing his studies next year. Alberto helped me round in Montevideo. He had also contacted Eugene Relgis, to whom I had already written about my trip, and helped in translating for Eugene and I when we met for over two hours on 26 October. Eugene Relgis and his wife - both about 80 years of age - treated me as a close friend meeting after a long time. Eugin, a humanist, author of over fifty books published in many languages, was once a Council member of the War Resisters International. His health is very bad. He has several ailments; but mentally he is completely alert. Before I left him he pointed to a pile of medicaments which he has to take in quantities: "tonight after meeting you I feel so well that I do not need any of those things".

I had some lengthy talks with Earl Smith, both regarding the work of nonviolence in Uruguay in particular and Latin America in general and also about the projected conference in Medellin, Colombia at the end of February 1974. The theme of this conference will be: Nonviolent Strategies for Latin America. For this conference Hildagard Goss-Mayr has been greatly responsible. Earl Smith hoped that Helder Camara and Cesar Chavez will also attend the conference. This conference should be viewed against the background of the Costa Rica conference of 1971. I liked their approach, "we do not want any people at the conference who have doubts about nonviolence; we want to plan strategy for nonviolent action for the liberation of Latin America; we do not want to spend time in debating whether nonviolence is good or not..."

BRAZIL - 27 October to 1 November

The largest country in Latin America, with a population of over 98 millions. The white European population is 60%; Mulattos 26%; Africans 11%; mixed white and Indians 2%; Asians 1%. It is estimated that there are about 180,000 American Indians in Brazil. The language of the country is Portuguese.

During Joao Goulart's presidency the economic situation of Brazil deteriorated alarmingly. Inflation was running at the rate of 7.4% per month; there were constant workers' and students' strikes; and general unrest all over the country. The military walked in and Gen. Castelo Branco became President. They called it Revolution. Under a new set of rules, called the Institutional Act, repressive provisions were made against the "enemies of the Revolution". All constitutional and legal guarantees were suspended. The Supreme Revolutionary Command assumed the power to suspend for ten years the political rights of any person and to stop annual renewals of Federal, State or municipal tenure. After the elections in 11 States in October 1965, in which the opposition won 6 States, Branco suspended all political parties and granted himself the power to pass laws and amend the constitution. This was in defiance of the Congress. After a month he eased the ban on political parties and introduced a two-party political system. Prior to this step Branco was sincerely announcing that he will not remain president after 1967, but now he formed his own party: Alianca Renovadora Nacional. An opposition party also came into being: Movimento Democratico Brasileiro. When the elections were held on 3 September for governors and 3 October for president and vice-president the Movimento boycotted them; so all the candidates put up by the government were elected; Costa e Silva was elected for the post of president.

Before his inauguration as president on 15 March 1967, Silva visited the USA among other countries. After he became president he made many pronouncements explaining what sort of Brazil he wanted to see: a country guided by the ideal of "social humanism"; the foreign affairs of which would be "a diplomacy of prosperity"; and that she will cooperate with all countries. The situation seemed to improve slightly. Some confidence in Brazil's power of recovery was expressed by big foreign capital investments and loans from international banking bodies. The 22nd Annual meeting of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund was held in Brazil in Sept/October 1967. This, I think, should be interpreted as the banks' confidence in Brazilian administration.

Despite assurances and reassurances from the government that there were no Brazilian exiles or people banished, a large number of politicians, including three ex-presidents, were either living in exile or if living in the country were barred from exercising their constitutional rights. Repression increased and so did public resentment. Mass demonstrations - sometimes violent - took place. A demonstration of over 60,000 people, who included priests, nuns, teachers and writers, took place in Rio on 26 June 1968. The army barracks in Sao Paulo were bombed.

Although some bishops sided with the government and denounced subversive activities, the top leadership allowed priests and nuns to take part in demonstrations by students. The proportion of students taking part in these demonstrations was so great that Silva ordered some reforms in the educational system. At the same time further repressive measures were introduced.

At the end of 1968 Silva dissolved the Congress and proclaimed martial law throughout the country. In August 1969 when Silva became partially paralysed, three armed forces' ministers decided to continue his administration. In the meantime terrorists abducted the US Ambassador who was freed after their demand for the release of 15 prisoners was complied with. This incident was used to escalate the repression of all opposition. A large number of arrests was made - these included the "known enemies". A new president - Gen. Garrastazu Medici - was elected on 25 October 1969. Terrorist activities increased; kidnappings, e.g. that of the Swiss Ambassador (freed after the release and transport to Chile or 70 prisoners); killing of policemen and other large scale killings became common.

In spite of these disturbances the economy of the country was growing rapidly. Thanks to US aid of all sorts exports, balance of payments and the cost of living increased. Brazil was on the way to an economic boom. The World Bank gave a loan of \$130 million for road building and the International Development Bank \$30 million for the construction of water supply and sanitation. The President expressed the need to correct the imbalance between rural and urban areas. Brazil, as it seemed to be on its way to be the dominant power in Latin America, extended its territorial waters to 200 miles, prohibited foreign vessels from fishing within 100 miles from the coast, and required special licences for fishing within the outer 100 miles.

It must be pointed out (according to the Wall Street Journal, in fact) that the booming economy might not have had any impact on well over half the population. Another point to remember is that over 60% of Brazilians live in rural areas. So the boom has benefited only the top strata of society, more so the US multinational corporations which dominate the life of the country. Massive loans from the Bank, Fund and Aid programmes have made Brazil totally dependent on the USA;

in fact it is now common talk that Brazil is both a tool and the model for other Latin American countries in the hands of the USA.

My schedule

Don Helder Camara had written a very warm letter welcoming me to Brazil. As he told me when I saw him, he had wanted to make an intensive plan for me to visit his centres and meet many people. This could not happen, because the military regime was getting very tough on his colleagues and had been trying to discredit him by calling him a communist etc. I reached Recife at 9.30 pm, an hour later than scheduled. Although I had informed him of the time of my arrival, I was not expecting anybody to meet me at the airport, and was planning to look for a hotel. Nevertheless, I walked to the terminal and stayed there for a few minutes in such a way as to make myself visible, in case somebody did come. Not seeing anyone I went to the baggage claim area. Suddenly I saw Don Helder gently emerging from the crowd. I rushed to greet him and asked if he too had travelled by the same plane. "No, I have come to meet you, the plane was late..." I was so moved. It is not usual that the Archbishop of a city goes to meet somebody at an airport in the manner that he did. He had come alone in a taxi, so there was not even a chauffeur. He called a taxi. From the manner of the driver and two or three other people who approached him I noticed how much he is respected by the people. We drove to the centre where I was to stay. He introduced me to two or three of his colleagues, Dutch priests, who helped me throughout my stay in Recife. Don Helder had already explained to me the serious situation in which he and many of his colleagues were. Next day he came to take me to his residence where we had a long talk.

Instead of the "Palace" he had chosen to live in a house with three small rooms, attached to a small church - a great example of simplicity. One room has an old desk, two or three simple chairs and some shelves; another room a sort of kitchen corner and the third is his bedroom. He pointed to the ceiling above the bed and said "the bed is exactly under the altar". Then through an internal door we entered the church. Again, he pointed to the altar, "the bed is exactly below the altar." The previous day while telling me about the difficult situation they were in, he had said that six of his colleagues had been arrested without any charges. Two of them, in fact, were picked up in a car driven by plain clothes men. He said, "anything can happen to us; I have come here (to the airport) alone; I am not afraid, God is with me..."

At our meetings that day and later a number of important points were discussed. I shall try to write them down as briefly as I can: We must be prepared to face the real situation in the world today. When asked by young people about violence or nonviolence we should be able to present the real answers. Today we are discovering super-powers - USA, a new empire; the E.E.C., which is also becoming more and more an empire; Japan; Soviet Union; China; but the problem is not only of super-powers, it is also of multinational corporations. For instance their wealth is based on the poverty of Latin American countries. The USA evidently is using Brazil, both as a model and a base for its domination on South America. When Bolivia had a leftist government the USA used the Brazilian air force to crush them, as it did in crushing the Tupamarus in Uruguay.

From Allende's experience it now seems clear that any single country has no possibility of facing the multinational corporations. Immediately after Cuba many young people had the impression that only armed movements have the possibility of changing the structure.

To them it should be said Cuba cannot be a model. Because at that time outside the USA, Cuba had only Russia to go to. And although Cuba, on behalf of Russia, was preparing for the Cubanisation of Latin America, it should not be forgotten that at Yalta Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin had divided their influence regions. At that meeting they all had accepted Latin America to be within the US region of influence.

Don Helder emphatically said, addressing himself to the youth who say that violent revolution is the only answer, that even if you get the money by raiding a bank or by any other means, where will you buy arms? How to use the arms? Above all how can you prepare people who are living under sub-human conditions? "While they do not have a reason for living, it is not possible to have a reason for dying." It should also be noted that the managers of arms manufacture are on the side of the oppressors. The violence of the oppressors is so sophisticated and overwhelming that the violence of the oppressed cannot match it. The development of the "electronic battle-field" and the data-bank society are the examples of the means in the hands of the oppressors and those who are on their side.

However, after giving these arguments, the question should be answered: "can something be achieved by nonviolence?" We have also to ask the following questions: "is it possible to create a new religious sect? a new Party? or organisational unification of all the peace forces? The answer is NO. We have to emphasise that a united movement under one umbrella is neither a desirable aim nor possible. What we should work for is the creation of many many groups with their own names, their own leadership and their own course of action. But we should establish some priorities. Don Helder said that during his eight years of experience in nonviolence and contact with people around the world, he feels hopeful because there are already small groups which work for the construction of a more just and human society.

It is, however, difficult to work in a country under military dictatorship. With the mass media in their hands, the government has a big force of persuasion. People who work for justice and peace have no possibility of using press, radio or TV. "I do not have the right of defence ... it is not possible to get 10, 20 or 30 people to go to prison."

"In great Britain we know that the price of the Industrial Revolution was the lives of poor people. Today in Latin America we are living in five or even fifty industrial revolutions, and the price again is the lives of the poor people of Latin America. It is said that to have real economic promotion two preliminary conditions are necessary. First: get rid of corruption (absence of honesty), and second: fight subversion. But when students, workers and religious people discuss corruption and injustices in society and denounce them, they are immediately judged as subversive.

Don Helder and his colleagues were very depressed, not only because co-workers were being put in prison, but also because of some personal comments made by some of the parents of workers who have been arrested. It should be noted that there have been some instances when some people planned to kill Helder Camara or defame him on moral grounds.

One of the things he repeated more than once was: "what I want to explore with you is how do we work for nonviolent social change under military dictatorships? Not in the USA like King, Gandhi in India, not Belgium, but countries under dictatorships, without having press, radio etc available to them". In fact he and his colleagues are doing precisely this sort of thing, i.e. conscientisation of

people, especially the poor. I attended a mass taken by Don Helder. It was very impressive and the sermon he gave was not abstract stuff, but something which is related to the lives of people and something which will encourage them to be independent and exercise their rights. Whenever I had a chance to be with him on public occasions I noticed how deep a sense of affection and warmth he generates among people.

We also talked about our role in promoting the movement. "I think of you, as myself, we have a certain role in the line of establishing unions of minorities, to conscientise the people of poor countries. We must visit countries in the line of trying to obtain unity and not unification" of people and groups working for peace and justice.

"When I received your letter announcing your visit," Don Helder said once again, "I was very happy and I had made plans to show you our work and arrange meetings with our workers. But the present situation is so bad that I could not do much for your visit." He was sorry that my visit took place at the time when they were passing through a very difficult period. "But for me", I told him, "It was a great experience to learn about the situation first hand, and I was grateful to be with him at this particular time to share the hardship." It was indeed a very intimate conversation all through.

Although Don Helder Camara overwhelms my other impressions of Brazil, I did have the chance to talk to many people - both singly and in groups. Apart from talks of his work I had conversations about the social and economic conditions in the country, especially those of the native Americans (Indians).

VENEZUELA - 1-4 November

Venezuela has a population of nearly 11 millions, with 68% mestizo; 20% white and 9% African. There are hardly any native Americans (Indians) left in Venezuela.

Venezuela is unique in one respect at least. It is a country of young people; about 54% of the population is under 15 years of age, and 82% of the total population under 30 years. One of the reasons for this is the rapid check in recent years on infant mortality. Secondly, since it is a large country with a small population there has not been any campaign for family planning. Furthermore, people coming to cities from villages have large families, which are useful for farming people. There is also a mystique of male virility, which is proven by the number of offsprings. An example of this was the national hero Juan Vicente Gomez, the dictator who is also called "the benevolent despot", and who ruled for 27 years, from 1908 to 1935. He never married but had 40 recognised children and perhaps a hundred more. He is known in the country as a very "macho" (manly) person. Today when the presidential candidate Lorenzo Fernandez addresses the women on tv or radio he says that Venezuela needs many more children and that their duty as Venezuelan mothers is to have many more children for the progress of the country.

This has already made a tremendous impact on the unemployment problem; in five or six years time the problem may become acute. Already there is a big gap between the rich and the poor. Situated on many hills in a long narrow valley, Caracas presents a picture of two extremes existing side by side. Hills covered with shacks on the one hand and middle and upper-middle class multistorey flats on the other. It is said that Venezuela is a rich country of poor people. People there do not die of hunger because there is an abundance of fruits and vegetables, but they are badly under-nourished. About 30% of the houses of 2 and a half million people of Caracas are shacks.

In several spots of the city I was reminded of Indian slums where mountains of rubbish lie and people live around them. At several places I observed dustmen at work with municipal dustcarts. My guide told me that it was the pre-election period. In December elections, for president and both the houses, would be held and the ruling party, Christian Democratic Party, whose candidate was Lorenzo Fernandez, was working hard to win the people; even those who are living in slums. All over the city there were abundant large and small election posters.

Politically, I felt, an average Venezuelan was more conscious than an average citizen of other countries of Latin America. Apart from the two major parties, Christian Democratic Party and Accion Democratica, there were about twenty other parties, and for the December elections thirteen candidates. The youth like to say that they belong to the left, and are clearly anti-American. People do not like to call themselves rightists. However when one looks at where the major two parties stand in relation to US interests (more than 300 large US firms operate in Venezuela) one understands the reality. At the time of the Czechoslovakian invasion by the Warsaw Pact countries, the communist party had a big split. The faction which is called Movement for Socialism, led by Jose Vicente Rangel, who was against the invasion, drew about 60% of the membership of the communist party. This has become the third most important party in Venezuela.

Historically Venezuela has not been of much importance to the colonialists. This was the first point in Latin America which the Spanish discoverers touched - Columbus came here in his third voyage. Later when other discoverers came and saw the Native South Americans living in the lake on stilts, they called it Venezuela - little Venice. But soon they gave up Venezuela, not finding the "fountain of youth" in the Amazon jungles where they believed the "city of gold" was. They lost interest in the country and later leased it to a German banking concern, who also did not find it profitable. It became the least important colony. Venezuela became suddenly prominent with Simon Bolivar, the great liberator of Latin America, especially of the Andean nations. Bolivar's role in the history of Latin America is of great importance; although his dream of uniting Latin America shattered even during his own lifetime.

From then until the middle of our century, i.e. about 125 years, Venezuelans lived under dictatorships of one kind or another. It was in 1958 after the fall of the last dictator, Perez Jimenez, that Venezuela had her first popularly elected government. The 1973 elections will be the fourth presidential elections in the history of Venezuela.

At the beginning of this century Venezuela discovered "black gold". The dictators of this century prospered tremendously on account of the oil business. Perez Jimenez and his relatives must have made tons of money, a part of which they used in building great monuments and also some institutions of public utility, e.g. hospitals etc. Venezuela does receive much revenue, though most of the oil business is owned by the USA. About 90% of the country's export is oil and 70% of the income of the government comes from it. This makes the country as such rich, though the wealth remains in the hands of a few families, leaving 75% of the people in poverty. Venezuela has the largest middle class in Latin America - 14% of the population.

The Church in Venezuela has never been powerful. As an unimportant colony the Spanish rulers sent here numerically less and less qualified missionaries, so it has never been a robustly catholic country such as Mexico or Colombia. This has made Venezuelan society rather different. An integration of African, American Indian and

Spanish cultures and religions has created a special kind of lifestyle. I also noticed that racialism plays hardly any part in human relationships. A very large proportion of Venezuelans is really mixed, creating a racially new society.

It may be because of this characteristic of the lifestyle or the type of people - mostly poor - that I met, that I felt much more hopeful about the youth here.

My schedule

My major contacts in Venezuela were Esteban Wood, a Californian Roman Catholic priest who has become a Venezuelan in spirit, and the Confederation of Latin American Workers (CLAT), of which Emilio Maspero is the General Secretary. Father Esteban had made all the arrangements for me including a very good schedule which included a meeting at the Central University, a seminar at the Catholic University, a meeting at the office of his Mission, a couple of meetings with individuals and visits to the homes of some of his many contacts in the slum areas. He worked mostly with the young in the poorest areas of the city, before he went to a town about 50 miles from Caracas to look after a parish - again mostly with young people. We also paid a brief visit to this centre where I had an opportunity of meeting about 8-10 young people informally.

At the meeting on the campus of Central University we felt that it would be useful if I could be with this group for a longer period to discuss strategies for a nonviolent revolution. So it was agreed that on my way to Medellin in February 1974, I should stop in Caracas for four days and lead a workshop on nonviolence. The student leaders who asked me to do so were confident that there would be no problem in getting 20 or so people for the workshop.

I was particularly happy to meet a man named Cesar Alborno who is a teacher and very much interested in social change. We had long discussions on education and the role of the conscience in dictating one's action. Similarly a meeting with some priests - mostly from the USA (about 80% of all clergy in Venezuela are from the USA) was very valuable; we talked about the way people in their position can establish meaningful relationships with Venezuelan clergy and laity.

My long meeting at the CLAT office, specially with Emilio Maspero, was concerned with the work of CLAT and the WRI and possible co-operation between them and about the situation in Chile. I asked Emilio how he and CLAT saw the events in Chile. (The subject of Chile by itself is a long one and therefore I shall not include the discussion in this report. I am hoping to write a separate paper on it. Peace News will publish part of my conversation with Emilio in their 21 December issue.) At one stage I was told that the aim of CLAT was not limited to their work for better wages and conditions for workers, but was the mobilisation of all workers - factory and farm - underemployed and unemployed - to create a new society. CLAT emphasises nonviolence as the more effective tool for social change. Emilio said that the guerrilla movement in Latin America proved counter-productive. I pointed out that there has not been good contact and cooperation between radical pacifist/nonviolent groups and trade unions, which is a great gap needing to be filled. If the CLAT was working for a new nonviolent society, there is no reason why they and the WRI should not come closer. Emilio said that they will discuss this question at their next executive committee meeting to be held in February 1974. CLAT will also send to us a fully worked out analysis of the Chilean situation - Allende's period, the coup and post coup situation. (Central Latinoamericana de Trabajadores, Apartado 6681, Caracas 101, Venezuela).

My conversation with Father Esteban which took place on my way to the Caracas airport, just before leaving Venezuela, was quite reassuring. Esteban told me that several of his doubts regarding violence and nonviolence had been lifted and his hope in nonviolence and the possibilities of continuing the work for nonviolent social change in Venezuela had been strengthened by the meetings and discussions we had in the three days. I left Venezuela encouraged and grateful.

OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Latin America, unlike Africa and Asia, has a kind of cultural and political affinity among its 20 or so countries, which makes it easier to understand the problems of the continent as a whole. Over 90% of the population of Latin America is Christian; majority of which is Roman Catholic. Church is very powerful in most of the countries. The language of the whole continent is Spanish, except Brazil (Portuguese) where people also understand Spanish. They also have an identical past, e.g. colonial occupations and plunder, rule by personal dictators - often soldiers, supported by the rich class. Even before the 20th century the USA had started becoming the dominating power in Central and South America. Immediately after the Second World War the five big powers had accepted at their Yalta meeting that Latin America is a region of US influence.

The US hold over the economy of Latin American countries is total. With the acceptance of massive loans from the USA these countries also have to accept political dependence and overwhelming control of their economies by the USA multinational corporations. In other words, the US controls the lives in most of the countries of Latin America. It is almost impossible for the people of Latin America to decide what kind of government they want and what sort of relations they would have with other countries outside the Americas.

The urban economies of the most of the Latin American countries continue to expand more rapidly than in countries of Asia or Africa. Their planners follow the examples of the "developed" world. A small proportion of middle class people are prospering rapidly, but the vast majority hardly benefits from this industrial growth. The gap between the few rich and the majority poor is widening faster than anywhere else, making the situation dangerously tense.

About 100,000 land-owners own or control the best land of Latin America at the cost of 30 million poor peasants and landless families. Unemployment, economic and cultural stagnation, above all insufficient land to earn their own livelihood, compels the population to leave the countryside. They go to the town with the hope of getting employment. There are probably many other reasons for this movement of population. Every young man has to do military service during which he gets a taste of city life and its excitement. So after the completion of the service he takes the first chance to go to a town. Election propaganda, radio, television and improved transport systems, all these tend to attract a landless individual or family to leave those rural homes which hold no hope. Although this is a worldwide phenomenon, in Latin America its pace is much more rapid and tends to escalate the crisis with greater momentum. At the other end the story is equally sad. As more people move to the city more slums are created - making the life of the city increasingly difficult and violent.

The native population of Latin America, the originator of some of the greatest cultures in human history, has been the tragic victim of colonisation. As a result of the systematic policy of the colonisers to wipe out the Indians very few are left. Even now, some

countries continue to follow the same policies - they consider the Indians sub-human and therefore do not hesitate to kill them whenever they can and by whatever method; other countries commit the same sort of crimes by sheer neglect or economic and development policies, resulting in the destruction of the remaining Indians. A few countries only pretend to help preserve their life and culture.

An increasing number of people, particularly the young, are becoming politically aware and wish to liberate their countries from the oppressive rules and capitalist system. The only method they know is that of the gun, but their experience of violent revolutions so far has not been optimistic, nonetheless they hope that a day will come when the whole continent will rise in armed revolution. Many of them are searching for more certain the politically and morally sound methods to bring about the revolution in Latin America. With such an influential church it is imperative that the religious leadership take greatest responsibility for conscientising the people. It is already beginning to happen. The Declaration of Barbados regarding American Indians in Latin America and the Statement by about thirty bishops about social injustices are examples of this; but it is not sufficient. The scale of injustices is so large that a much greater initiative and commitment on the part of bishops and priests is required. As long as the number of outspoken religious leaders remains small they will continue to face persecution.

Although few, the experiences in nonviolent methods to fight injustices and conscientising the people indicate a significant direction of work for social revolution. As I was able to see for myself, violent methods to fight oppression have tended to create a more fearful and pessimistic climate. It does not mean that nonviolent revolutionary methods will succeed easily. In fact the nonviolent revolutionary faces the same kind of repression as the violent activist does. It seems to be a realistic hope that by using nonviolence not only sympathy and confidence, and to a great extent participation, in the struggle by the people, will be achieved, but it will also have a greater chance of becoming a mass movement.

The situation in Latin America makes one wish to give up, but the various nonviolent initiatives taken by some people have given me some hope for the future of a nonviolent struggle for peace and justice in Latin America. However, it is evident to the key people in the movement that the struggle is going to be tough and long.

I learnt a great deal from this experience. So many friends helped me in making the trip worthwhile, for which I thank them with all my heart.

For peace and justice,

Devi Prasad
Christmas 1973/4
New York

My main area of work on this trip to the USA was the South-West, particularly New Mexico; but I also spent four days in Palo Alto, California; one day in Kansas; and one day in Boulder, Colorado.

On 22 September Igal Roodenko met me at the New York City Eastside Air Terminal. It was good to see him again after several months and discuss the present situation of the peace movement in the States and specially the work of the WRL. Igal invited me to the farewell evening for Michael Cullen who was being deported back to Ireland from the States for his activities in the anti-war movement. Michael said that all the experience and love he had received in the States he will try to use in Ireland, his home country. I suggested to him that he contact the Irish Movement for Peace and Justice. His address will be: c/o Mr William Cullens, Kiltymon, Ashford, Co Wicklow.

At the same meeting, to my very pleasant surprise, I met many friends, among whom should be mentioned Ping and Carol Ferry, Jean and Edna Huerle and Eileen Egan. Eileen and I discussed the possibility of a meeting of people concerned with the question of conscientious objection which is on the agenda of the UN Human Rights Commission and how the NGOs should handle it before and at the next meeting of the Commission (Feb/Mar 1974). This meeting took place on 6 November when I passed through New York on my way back after the Latin American trip. It was held at the Quaker House with the following present: K Das, E Egan, V De Arunjyo, H Wilkinson, J Zavitz, A Willson, B Woodward and myself.

At the WRL office I met Dave McReynolds, Ralph Di Gia, Lynne Shatzkin and Jim Peck. They acquainted me with some of the important issues WRL faces today. My hosts, Joyce and Robert Gilmore, were as affectionate as ever. One day they invited Bayard Rustin for dinner; we were also joined by Charlie Bloomstein. One of the important points of discussion was whether it was desirable to press governments to interfere in internal affairs of other nations. The matter in question was civil liberties in the USSR - the official campaign against Sakharov, Solzhenitsyn and others. I strongly feel that by putting pressure on governments (e.g. USSR) to recognise dissension and freedom of expression as an essential part of life, and urging our own governments to do the same, is to strengthen democratic forces in those countries and by implication influence domestic policies of our own government. When the USA and USSR governments are "coming closer to each other" it will be an omission on the part of the US public, particularly the peace movements, if they do not urge their own government to raise the question of dissenters with the USSR government. It has been observed that while there is so-called detente on the one hand there is an increased repression within the USSR on the other.

PHILADELPHIA (26-27 September): We had a meeting of the Committee for International Nonviolence to finalise the details of my US and Latin American trips. As was decided that day the Committee met again on 5 November, when I reported on my trips and a review of the year's work was made. The Committee felt that the trips have shown positive results and should be of greater use in future. All the members of the Committee (Ann Davidon, John Briscoe, George Lakey and George Willoughby) felt the need to make fresh efforts to raise money for next year. In Philadelphia I had the opportunity to study the developments of the Movement for a New Society, which is growing. The MNS Life Center has reorganised its set-up by separating the

Movement's office and forming various collectives, e.g. training, printing. The printing shop of the Movement is now a fully self-contained unit (1006 South 46th St, Philadelphia, Pa. 19143)

KANSAS, Missouri (28 September): Bob Mayer (War Resisters League, 306 W 39th St, Kansas City, Missouri 64111) arranged the schedule which included two media appearances, a public meeting and a gathering at the War Tax Resistance office. The same day Igal Roodenko started a month long tour of the Plains States. My talk at the public meeting was about the worldwide nonviolent movement, its importance and growth. Igal, Bob and Bob (Calvert) also spoke. I understand that the local papers gave good coverage.

BOULDER, Colorado (29 September): I stayed with Paul Wehr, who is now the Executive Secretary of the Consortium on Peace Research, Education and Development based at the Campus in Boulder (COPRED, Institute of Behavioral Science, University of Colorado, Boulder, Col. 80302). I learnt about the Consortium and how my work could be related to them in promoting nonviolence and Gandhi's ideas of Satyagraha. They had already put a note in the COPRED newsletter saying that I was available "to teach short intensive segments (in courses) on Gandhi, Satyagraha and the transnational peace movement" at universities engaged in peace and conflict research.

PALO ALTO, California (30 September - 4 October): The Institute for the Study of Nonviolence (667 Lytton St, Palo Alto, Cal 94302) had organised a three day seminar, but instead of a seminar attended by the same people for its whole length it turned out to be a series of sessions on different topics attended by different people. Nonetheless the discussions were intensive and much interest was taken by the participants. Willy Kirkland felt that this time of the year was not suitable for many people who would have liked to attend the whole of the seminar. Those who did attend were interested in specific issues such as: Ashrams, their role in the movement and the problems they face in their day-to-day life; concrete illustrations of campaigns and struggles which are part of a world-wide nonviolent movement in making; the situation in Chile and how the movement could relate to it (e.g. urge the Chilean Government to publish a complete list of prisoners arrested in connection with the military take-over, so that people can go on enquiring about their conditions until they are released; and sending a pacifist team to study the situation in Chile). There was one session with a Chilean who knew a lot about the politics there. The Institute is preparing a document on Chile to be published as a special issue of their newsletter.

My stay at the Institute was very pleasant. Willy had left his cottage all to me. Jacky helped me with all the practical matters, Lee and Carol (Swenson) have adopted another child and I spent some time with the family. I was also able to have some good talks with Joan (Baez). She is very much involved in the work of Amnesty International.

THE SOUTH WEST (5-13 October): From Palo Alto I went to Albuquerque, New Mexico on 5 October. The schedule Craig Simpson had made for this area sounded exciting and full and it turned out to be really good. The first major item was a weekend seminar at YWCA camp at Tijeras. Craig expected about twenty people, but there were over thirty - from Durango, Las Cruces, Colorado Springs and Albuquerque. Most of the participants were concerned with Gandhi's ideas of Satyagraha; ways one can develop the power of nonviolence in one's own life; children and nonviolence; strategy of nonviolent action for social change and the form the world-wide movement was taking. Two long radio interviews

with KVNМ (Richard Eager) and KRST (Lloyd Covens) and one with the Albuquerque Journal, two classes at the Santa Fe College (on exploring effective ways of struggle against injustice and oppression), a potluck talk at the Friends House in Santa Fe and a talk on "building an international nonviolent movement" were good ways of reaching large numbers of people from different walks of life.

Resis Lopez Tijerina, who had led a land struggle in 1967/68, had taken up the cause of the native Americans whose land had been usurped by the US Government. The campaign, however, had turned to violence (it was not designed to be nonviolent anyway). Tijerina was arrested and put in prison for several years - he was out on parole now. He is a man full of vigour. I wish I had more time to talk to him, as I wanted to pin him down to the question of correct strategy, a topic which requires much more time than we had. (R. L. Tijerina, 1010 3rd N.W., Albuquerque, NM 87101)

Resis' brother Chamo and his wife Valentina are building a co-operative clinic in Tierra Amarilla, a Chicano community. It was an interesting contrast between the two brothers. While Resis is running an institute for justice and brotherhood, Chamo is building a grass-root nucleus with educational possibilities for the community. The Government pours so much money into the Chicano and Indian communities that an un-enlightened member is unable to make a correct judgement of the situation, i.e. exploitation and subtle ways of "cultural genocide" involved in the whole process. Young men are taken away from reservations and sent to schools and colleges for "higher education", thus alienating them from their own people and impoverishing the reservations permanently. We suggested to Chamo that he should get in close contact with Cesar Chavez and send some of his colleagues to Farm Workers groups for further experience. Chamo Tijerina liked the idea; in fact we found him an admirer of Cesar Chavez (La Co-operative Agricola Del Pueblo de Tierra Amarilla, PO Box 104, Tierra Amarilla, NM 87575)

A meeting at the KOVA Club - American Indian students club on the campus, proved not very successful. We were four - except myself all others were "white Americans". My feeling is that if I had gone there alone I would have had a more positive response from them. However a meeting with some AIM leaders was most encouraging. Maynard Stanley and Ernie Thompson, Coordinator and Treasurer, are very active people at their Window Rock office. They have tremendous faith in their spiritual inheritance. I found myself in a world of thoughts where so-called reason has little relevance. I tried to discuss the sort of strategies they could employ in their struggle for survival as native Americans with a great past and possibly also a great future, for they can contribute to the world elements which few others communities can give - vigour and love of nature. If white America had a little imagination it would not spare any effort to learn so much from their Indian brothers and sisters.

Ramon Vesa and Leroy Maes, two impressive Farm Workers in Alamosa, Colo., are organising a centre for that region. They are convinced that their work is not limited to farm workers; they have to organise all the people living in unprivileged conditions. There is a bookshop which pays for one or two workers; also a monthly journal in Spanish (Ahora Bookstore, Alamosa, Colorado)

The Albuquerque Nuclear Base museum is an interesting place to visit. On its visitors book there were some interesting comments: RIGHT ON; EXCELLENT; IT HAS TO BE DONE; I AM IMPRESSED etc, but a few comments of disapproval.

Throughout this tour of the US the observations I made during the trip last spring were confirmed. There seem to have developed three trends within the anti-war movement. Many of the people who have become tired of street demonstrations, concluding that these did not bring about any changes in society, have been joining all sorts of spiritualist movements. One of the examples of this is the stream of people finding the 15 year old Guru Maharajji a source of inner peace. Rene Davies is one of the central figures in the National Coalition in the late 60s and is a staunch disciple of the Maharajji.

The second trend comes from the more political type of people. Instead of growing into a new force among the youth, the New Left seems to have died, and many of its proponents have been falling back on orthodox political parties. They probably think that after all it is a question of capturing power and if they can be strong and imaginative enough not to abuse it - as many others have done in the past - or repeat mistakes made by their forerunners, they will be able to bring a socialist revolution. Bobby Seale ran for Mayorship of Berkeley and said in his campaign that he wants to go where money is, so that the condition of his people can be improved.

The third trend encourages me. People who took active part in the anti-war movement and who were inspired by the idea of finding new tools for social change are doing some serious thinking about their role in a long term perspective. They have not given up the idea of resistance against oppression and militarism, and direct action and demonstration as effective tools, but they feel that to create a climate for social revolution grass-root work is essential. Intensive experimental work to create alternative institutions and strategies must be done, so that people who have become disenchanted with the way society is being managed, and those who find it difficult to survive with dignity can do something about it. In time many thousands of such people will become skilled in the art of nonviolent revolution. I call it "theory of redundancy". When we start managing our own affairs and have developed powers of resistance against injustice, power politics will become redundant. The present centralised consumer economy depends on growth not constant production. If this growth can be stalled e.g. by increasing numbers of people finding and using alternative ways of producing and distributing, it will be weakened to a degree which will bring its end.

I feel my time in the US was spent very profitably; it was certainly very enjoyable. I shall be glad to receive any evaluation of the trip from friends who were involved and those who find the report worth commenting upon.

In gratitude to all friends who helped me in their several ways,

Devi Prasad